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SIPDIS
TELEGRAM

March 17, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 1285 - PRIORITY)
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PHUM, KDEM, KPAL
Captions: None
Subject: PEACEFUL MARCHES IN PROTEST OF THE IMPENDING U.S.
MILITARY ATTACK ON IRAQ
Ref: None

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 01285

SIPDIS
CXABU:
ACTION: POL
INFO: RSO AMB DCM P/M ECON

DISSEMINATION: POL
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: DCM: RAALBRIGHT
DRAFTED: POL: GARANA
CLEARED: POL: STWILLIAMS

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PP RUEHC RUEHDI RUEHEE
DE RUEHAD #1285 0761310
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 171310Z MAR 03
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8899
RUEHDI/AMCONSUL DUBAI 2886

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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [KPAL](#) [PHUM](#) [IZ](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: PEACEFUL MARCHES IN PROTEST OF THE IMPENDING
U.S. MILITARY ATTACK ON IRAQ

¶1. (U) The local press reported that students at the UAE University in Al-Ain participated in a peaceful anti-war demonstration on March 15. (Note: The UAE University, with some 14,000 students, is the largest in the UAE. End note.) The march was organized by the Emirates National Students' Union (ENSU) and was the first public protest by students against the war. Marchers carried UAE flags and placards criticizing the U.K. and the U.S. Speaking for the demonstrators, Wahid Al Badi, president of ENSU, asserted there was no justification for war. Badi was concerned that innocent Iraqis would be killed and he called for Muslim solidarity, especially with the Palestinian people. (Note: The number of demonstrators was not reported. End note.)

12. (U) Another peaceful demonstration took place in the Northern Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah on March 16. Local press reported that hundreds of protesters of various nationalities chanted slogans against the U.K. and the U.S. They called for a peaceful resolution to the Iraqi crisis and demanded that the inspectors be allowed to do their job. Protestors linked Iraq with the Palestinian situation and accused the U.S. of double standards, coveting Iraq's oil resources, and humiliating Arabs.

13. (SBU) Comment: These rallies are not unexpected considering the recent anti-war demonstrations that have taken place throughout the world. The protests here have been peaceful and well-organized and much smaller than the demonstrations that took place throughout the UAE at the beginning of the Intifadah and the Israeli incursion into Jenin. More marches are likely to occur in the near future, especially during the first few days of a conflict with Iraq.

WAHBA